

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested.

Claims 8-10, 13 and 18 are pending in this application. Claim 13 is independent. Claims 8-10, 13 and 18 have been rejected under § 112, first paragraph. Claims 8-10, 13 and 18 have been rejected under § 103(a). Independent claim 13 has been amended. New dependent claim 23 has been added.

Specifically, the limitation in claim 13 that the peripheral device is configured to be directly operationally connected only to the inward-facing port has been replaced with the limitations that the peripheral device includes a single port for directly operationally connecting the peripheral device to another device, that it is that single port that directly operationally connects the peripheral device to the inward-facing port, and that the peripheral device is directly operationally connected to no other device. Support for this amendment is found in the application as filed *e.g.* in peripheral device 90 of Figure 5, a DiskOnKey™ flash memory that has a single USB port for directly operationally connecting the DiskOnKey™ flash memory to another device, that is directly operationally connected to inward-facing port 74 by that single USB port, and that is directly operationally connected to no other device.

In addition, the limitation that the ports of the connector are USB ports has been moved to new dependent claim 23.

§ 112, First Paragraph Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 8-10, 13 and 18 under § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Examiner finds no support in the specification as originally filed for “a peripheral

device...configured to be directly operationally connected only to said inward-facing port”.

The Examiner’s rejection is respectfully traversed. The limitation in question has been deleted from claim 13, thereby rendering moot the Examiner’s rejection.

§ 103(a) Rejections – Meng ‘399 in view of Zhu et al. ‘833

The Examiner has rejected claim 4 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meng, US 6,231,399 (henceforth, “Meng ‘399”) in view of Zhu et al., US Patent No. 6,142,833 (henceforth, “Zhu et al. ‘833”). The Examiner’s rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner interprets Meng ‘399 as teaching a system board connector **10** that includes two ports **14** and **16**, with port **16** facing inward to the interior of the system board. The Examiner interprets Zhu et al. ‘833 as teaching a system board connector that includes a first port **21** at an exterior edge of the system board and facing outward from the exterior edge and a second port **23**. Accepting for the sake of argument the correctness of the Examiner’s interpretation, the references cited by the Examiner fail to teach, hint or suggest the system board recited in Applicant’s claim 13. The purpose of connector **10** of Meng ‘399 is stated in column 2 lines 62-65:

The two card edge connectors **14**, **16** of the card edge connector assembly **10** engage daughter boards at an elevated position thereby promoting an efficient layout of components on the mother board.

The purpose of the daughter boards is to connect still other devices to the system board of connector **10**, so these daughter boards inherently must have other ports of their own, other than the ports that mate with ports **14** and **16**. The purpose of the connector of Zhu et al. ‘833 is stated in column 1 lines 16-25:

However, if a specific application requires the positioning of one or more of the mating ports in a front panel of a computer enclosure rather than in a rear panel thereof, the conventional connector having

the ports aligned in a single parallel direction can not be used to achieve such an aim. The conventional connector has no additional port for directly electrically connecting with another electrical connector assembled to the front panel within the computer enclosure after the conventional connector is fixed to the rear panel thereof.

from which it is clear that second port 23 is intended to be connected somehow to another port at a different edge of the system board. In other words, whatever device is connected directly to port 23 of Zhu et al. '833 either includes another port at a different edge of the system board or is also operationally connected, either directly or indirectly via another device, to another port at a different edge of the system board. Both Meng '399 and Zhu et al. '833 intend whatever devices, that are mated to their connector ports that do not face outward, to facilitate further connection to yet other devices. Even if it is accepted for the sake of argument that one ordinarily skilled in the art would infer from Meng '399 and Zhu et al. '833 the possibility of configuring a system board connector with an outward-facing port and an inward-facing port, it still would not occur to such a person ordinarily skilled in the art to directly operationally connect to the inward-facing port a peripheral device that has only one port for mating with the inward-facing port of the connector and that, when so mated, is not directly operationally connected to any other device, as recited in Applicant's claim 13.

With independent claim 13 allowable in its present form it follows that claims 8-10, 18 and 23 that depend therefrom also are allowable.

Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings as failing to show "the peripheral device...configured to be directly operationally connected only to said inward facing port". The Examiner's objection is respectfully traversed. The limitation in question has been deleted from claim 13, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's objection.

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 13, and hence dependent claims 8-10, 18 and 23 are in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of allowance is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark M. Friedman
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 33,883

Date: July 17, 2008